CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

5   1.   In a computer system, a method of signaling that an event has occurred, comprising the steps of:

a) an application program of said computer system making a call to request a display attribute for an event object to be displayed on a display screen, said call including an event type corresponding to said event object;

10   b) in response to said request, indexing a table with said event type and a screen capability flag to obtain said display attribute, wherein said table is located externally of said application program and has a plurality of display attribute lists, each of said display attribute lists having a display attribute corresponding to each of said event types; and,

15   c) said application program displaying said event object on said display screen with said display attribute, wherein a user of said computer system is signaled that an event has occurred.

2.   The method of Claim 1, further comprising the step of:

20   setting at least one display attribute in said table such that said display attribute conveys a particular meaning to the user of the computer system.

3.   The method of Claim 2 wherein said at least one display attribute is a color.

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4.   The method of Claim 2 wherein said meaning to the user is warning.

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5. The method of Claim 2 wherein the meaning to the user is caution.

6. The method of Claim 2 wherein the meaning to the user is status is good.

5   7. The method of claim 1 further comprising the step of said application program changing at least one of said display attributes.

8. The method of Claim 1 further comprising the step of a user of said computer system changing at least one of said display attributes.

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9. The method of Claim 1 wherein said table resides in an operating system of said computer system.

10. The method of Claim 1 further comprising the step of:

15   accessing said screen capability flag from an operating system.

11. The method of Claim 1 wherein said computer system is a palmtop computer system.

20   12. A computer system comprising:

a processor coupled to a bus;

a display screen coupled to said bus;

a memory unit coupled to said bus and comprising instructions that when executed by said processor implement a method of signaling that an event has

25   occurred, comprising the steps of:

a) an application program of said computer system making a call to request a display attribute for an event object to be displayed on a display screen, said call including an event type corresponding to said event object;

b) in response to said request, indexing a table with said event type and

5   a screen capability flag to obtain said display attribute, wherein said table is located externally of said application program and has a plurality of display attribute lists, each of said display attribute lists having a display attribute corresponding to each of said event types; and,

c) said application program displaying said event object on said display

10   screen with said display attribute, wherein a user of said computer system is signaled that an event has occurred.

13.   A computer system as described in Claim 12 wherein said computer system is a portable computer system.

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14.   A computer system as described in Claim 12 wherein said computer system is a palm-sized computer system.

15.   In a palm-top computer system, a method of displaying information,

20   comprising the steps of:

a) an application program of said computer system making a call to request a display attribute for an event object to be displayed on a display screen, said call including an event type corresponding to said event object;

b) in response to said request, indexing a table with said event type and

25   a screen capability flag to obtain said display attribute, wherein said table is located externally of said application program and has a plurality of display

attribute lists, each of said display attribute lists having a display attribute corresponding to each of said event types; and,

c) said application program displaying said event object on said display screen with said display attribute, wherein a user of said computer system is

5 signaled that an event has occurred.

16.   The method of Claim 15, further comprising the step of:

setting at least one display attribute in said table such that said display attribute conveys a particular meaning to the user of the computer system.

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17.   The method of Claim 16 wherein said display attribute is a color.

18.   The method of Claim 15 wherein step a) comprises the step of:

a1) an event external to said palm-top computer system triggering said

15 call by said application program to request said display attribute for said event object.

19.   The method of Claim 18 wherein:

said event external to said palm-top computer system is a stock price

20 reaching a pre-defined price.

20.   The method of Claim 18 wherein:

said event external to said palm-top computer system is the computer entering a certain geographic location.